

Financial Aid News

WASHINGTON HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

Issue 6 — July 29, 2002

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HECB establishes Promise Scholarship award amounts

The Higher Education Coordinating Board has established 2002-03 maximum award amounts for the Promise Scholarship program at \$948 per student for two semesters or three quarters of enrollment. Recipients must be enrolled at least half time.

Each year, the Board sets the Promise Scholarship award amount based on the number of applicants and available funding. The 2002-03 award reflects an increase in applicants accompanied by a decrease in funding.

A list of more than 6,700 Promise Scholarship eligible applicants for 2002-03 is available on the Board's password-protected Web site for aid administrators. Another 100 to 200 students may be added over the next two months, but otherwise the list is substantially complete.

The program will begin accepting 2002-03 warrant and cash requests as early Aug. 15, 2002. If you have questions about the Promise Scholarship program, contact John Klacik at (360) 753-7851 (johnk@hecb.wa.gov) or Dana Lemay at (360) 753-7820 (danal@hecb.wa.gov).



Higher Education
Coordinating Board

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Grants available – Educational Opportunity Grant program

As reported in the HECB update at the recent WFAA Summer Workshops, we are still accepting Educational Opportunity Grant applications for the 2002-03 academic year. The \$2,500 renewable grant assists placebound individuals who have completed their first two years of college and who wish to complete a four-year degree. Funds are available for an additional 250 to 350 new awards.

Community colleges may want to take special notice of this opportunity and make sure summer graduates get information about the EOG program. **Four-year schools** may want to examine the recently admitted fall transfer population to see if these students have information about the program. If you would like promotional materials or have questions about the program, contact Dawn (Cypriano) McAferty at (360) 753-7846 or at dawnc@hecb.wa.gov.

Public invited to comment on permanent rules changes for financial aid programs

At its September meeting, the Higher Education Coordinating Board will be asked to adopt permanent changes to the rules governing the State Need Grant, State Work Study, and Promise Scholarship programs. The proposed new rules would make permanent several changes passed by the 2002 Legislature and approved by the Board as emergency rules in June.

The public has opportunity for comment on the proposed rules before the Board considers their permanent adoption. A public hearing is scheduled for August 23, 9 a.m. to 12 noon, at the Higher Education Coordinating Board, 917 Lakeridge Way SW, Olympia, WA. For more information about the hearing, or if you need special accommodations, please contact Colleen Scovill at (360) 753-7850 or by email at colleens@hecb.wa.gov.

The Board will also accept comments in writing. Address comments to: John Klacik, Associate Director for Financial Aid, 917 Lakeridge Way, P.O. Box 43430, Olympia, WA 98504-3430, Fax: (360) 753-7808, Email: johnk@hecb.wa.gov.

The emergency rules, which will serve as the baseline for public comment and the development of permanent rules, are available online in the June 11, 2002, Higher Education Coordinating Board packet: [HECB June meeting packet](#).

Federal appeals court rules state cannot deny Promise Scholarship to theology majors

A federal appeals court ruled on July 18, that Washington State could not deny a Promise Scholarship to a student who decided to major in both business administration and pastoral ministries.

In a 2-1 decision, a panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said the state of Washington and the Higher Education Coordinating Board had violated the First Amendment's religious-freedom provision and the 14th Amendment's equal-protection guarantees when it denied a Washington Promise Scholarship to Joshua Davey in 1999.

Davey was awarded a \$1,125 Promise Scholarship for his freshman year at Northwest College in Kirkland. The Higher Education Coordinating Board rescinded the award after he started his studies, when he declared his intent to major in pastoral ministries. The Board's decision rested on the understanding that the state's constitution prohibits spending public money or property for religious instruction, and state law that prohibits the award of financial aid to students who pursue degrees in theology.

Davey sued the state, and in 2000 a lower federal court ruled in favor of the state. Davey appealed, and the 9th Circuit appeals panel said the state's scholarship criteria discriminated "in such a way as to suppress a religious point of view."

In its ruling, the federal court invalidated a provision in the state constitution and in state law that create the separation of church and state, particularly as it applies to the use of public money. HECB staff will continue to work with the agency's assistant attorney general to study the impact of the ruling and to determine options for any further action on the ruling.

HECB launches new secure file transfer and email features to its aid administrators' Web site

The HECB has implemented a new feature to its password-protected Web site that permits aid administrators to securely transmit confidential student information to the Board. The new "Secure File Upload" and the "Secure EMail" are active links found on the password-protected Web site for aid administrators.
(www.hecb.wa.gov/hecblogin/login.asp).

Promise Scholarship ruling in the news

The Chronicle of Higher Education and several news organizations in the state reported on 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals Promise Scholarship ruling.

Some of the articles and editorials are linked here:

The Chronicle of Higher Education
(for subscribers):

[Federal appeals court strikes down state law barring financial aid for theology majors](#)

The News Tribune
(Tacoma):

[Another surprise church-state ruling from the 9th circuit](#)

Seattle Post-Intelligencer:

[Law on church-state separation violated student's rights, court rules](#)

The Seattle Times:

[Court: state can't deny aid to theology students](#)

Please use these links to transmit warrant requests, reconciliation reports, unit record reports, SNG interim reports, student time sheets, student repayment information and any other documents that may include personally identifiable information.

By clicking on the "Secure File Upload" link in the password-protected Web site, you will see a dialog box that lets you identify a file from your computer for transmission to the HECB. The dialog box also allows you to send the file to a specific program area within the Board and to add a message describing the file. Clicking the "send" button automatically causes the files and email to be encrypted and sent to the Board. When the file arrives at the Board, it will go to the program manager for the area you specified. In addition to any description of the file that you included with the upload, your name, school, and email address will be automatically added to the information the Board receives.

The "secure email" transfer works in a similar manner, although you will type your message directly into the dialog box for delivery to the Board.

If you have questions about the password protected Web site, the secure file upload, or the secure e-mail feature, please contact Chris Leeper at 360-753-7840 (chrisl@hecb.wa.gov) or John Klacik at (360) 753-7851 (johnk@hecb.wa.gov).

SWS says farewell to Chris, welcome to Khris

Chris Wilkins, State Work Study program coordinator at the Board, has announced she will leave her position at the end of this month to pursue a new life in Texas. Chris joined the Board's SWS staff in 1996, after serving several years as the Board's Displaced Homemaker program coordinator. Her work has left a permanent positive mark on the program, where she has been instrumental in developing student employment training programs, and most recently, a Web-based program to assist schools with employer, job description, and payment information.

Khris Blumer joins the agency this week to assume the responsibilities that Chris Wilkins has administered so ably for the program. Some of you may recall that Khris, who recently graduated from St. Martin's College with a degree in business, worked on the program from 1999 to 2001 as a SWS student employee. You can reach Khris at (360) 753-7847 or khrisb@hecb.wa.gov.